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Northern Developments

The Newsletter of the Northern Alberta Development Council

Expanded student funding supports northern health careers

Bursary funding has expanded for health care students interested in a career in Northern Alberta. The Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) is offering new and increased funding through bursary programs that link students to northern employers, especially in the health professions.

A new Bursary for Pharmacy Students offers \$3,000 to be matched by pharmacies, health regions or other sponsors for a total of \$6,000 per student. This initiative is similar to the \$5,000 bursary created last year for medical students, which can be matched by sponsors for a total of \$10,000 per student.

"The High Level area has experienced a shortage of pharmacists and other areas of the North are facing similar difficulties" said Mike Mihaly, Chair of the NADC Bursary Selection Committee. "We believe the new \$6,000 co-sponsored bursary will help local pharmacies attract graduates."

Northern health regions are also working with the Council to increase the number of

students taking a practicum in the region. The new Health Care Practicum Placement Funding program helps students with the cost of travel and accommodation. "Once they're here, we can show students how wonderful the region is," said Mihaly. "Health regions see practicums as an excellent recruitment tool."

Students are advised to check deadlines. The deadline for the new partnership bursaries is three months before the completion of an academic year. Applications are available from the Northern Alberta Development Council office at (780) 624-6545 (toll free by first dialling 310-0000) or online at www3.gov.ab.ca/nadc.

"Bringing graduates into northern communities is essential to create a sustainable social and economic environment."

I strongly encourage students to choose a northern future and apply for the bursaries."

Pearl Calahasen,

Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.

Exciting opportunities for co-operation between Alberta and the Northwest Territories

Transportation, health, research and innovation, water and tourism were some of the topics discussed at a meeting between Alberta and the Northwest Territories in Yellowknife on June 8, 2004. The discussions involved the co-chairs overseeing the Alberta-Northwest Territories Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Cooperation and Development.

"I was very pleased with the direction

discussions took," said Michael Miltenberger, MOU co-chair and Northwest Territories Minister of Health and Social Services. "We have many areas of common interest where collaboration and an exchange of information with our southern colleagues can result in positive progress for the people of the North. We have tasked our staff to produce a three-year workplan detailing important issues on which we want to move forward."

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Check out the NADC website www3.gov.ab.ca/nadc, for information on upcoming events, recent publications, reports, and NADC programs.



Rural health innovations and success celebrated

"Grow Your Own" was the theme of Rural Health Week this year, which ran from June 13 to 19, 2004.

The Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) joined with more than 40 Alberta provincial, regional and local health and community organizations, to raise awareness and to showcase success stories and contributions of rural health professionals and organizations.

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Rural health care is important to northern Albertans

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Growing local expertise is a key theme of NADC healthcare education initiatives. Whether through bursaries or promotion of increased educational opportunities in the North, a key solution to staffing shortages, especially in rural areas, is the development of local skills and expertise.

More than a third of NADC Bursary recipients are nursing students who help to fill a high need for nursing staff across the region. Paramedics, Licensed Practical Nurses and social workers are also frequent bursary recipients. The NADC recently increased bursary values for students in medicine and pharmacy in response to healthcare needs in the region.

Students often gain a wide range of valuable experiences when they are fortunate enough to land a practicum placement in a rural location. But for a typical student the cost of travelling to a community and a second residence while they are there can be prohibitive. To address this, the northern health regions, in conjunction with the NADC,

Bursary Success

Carmela, a Licensed Practical Nurse graduate of Northern Lakes College, is one of the more than 200 students in health programs who have received bursaries from the NADC in the past three years. Carmela appreciates the wide range of work experiences she has in High Prairie. "There are a lot more opportunities to learn in a rural setting," says the recent graduate. "Working closely with the on-duty RN, I have the opportunity to do tasks I might not be given in a larger centre."

Patricia is a graduate of the Combined Lab and X-Ray Technology program at NAIT, who returned to her home community of La Crete after finishing her studies and works at the St. Theresa General Hospital in Fort Vermilion. "What I like about working in a smaller hospital is that you get to use your education more," says Patricia. "There's a much broader range of activities in a small health care centre and it's nice to come back to the great small-town atmosphere."

Sasha, a pharmacist in Grande Prairie since graduating three years ago, received two NADC Bursaries to help with her education. "I had always intended to return home after university, but after accepting the money, it sealed the deal." She has seen the effects of pharmacist shortages in the past few years. "There is an alarming shortage of pharmacists in this area, and the ones here now are feeling the stresses of it." She believes that promoting northern Alberta to pharmacy graduates is valuable. She herself has settled in, concluding: "I suppose I will always be a Peace Country resident now."

"Homegrown" professional development

"It was my hope and dream to become a degree holder," says Judy, who just completed her Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) through the University of Calgary. The BSW is offered in collaboration with Blue Quills First Nations College near St. Paul.

Judy and fellow students completed a social work diploma program a number of years ago. "Some wanted to continue their education and were faced with moving away from home." She describes being able to complete a degree program close to her home in the Saddle Lake First Nation as a "godsend."

Finishing the degree has benefited her in other ways too. "It was a unique way to learn about myself. I learned about acknowledging my heritage and embracing my ancestry." Judy puts her new skills and knowledge to use working for the Boys and Girls Club in Saddle Lake.

are offering funding to healthcare practicum students heading for a rural community. This new funding is targeted to programs that are in high need in certain communities and will vary across the region.

Helping students with the cost of education is only one piece of the puzzle. To increase local access to education, the NADC worked with northern stakeholders to lobby for social work degree education in Northern Alberta. The Access Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) has seen over 150 graduates since starting in rural communities across the province in 2000.

The NADC also undertakes collaborative research with northern colleges through the Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse project. Four Northern Alberta colleges participate in planning the research: Grande Prairie Regional College, Northern Lakes College, Portage College and Keyano College. Research into healthcare education needs helped to enhance and expand on Licensed Practical Nurse Training and highlighted the need for social work education.

More information about funding and other initiatives is available from the Northern Alberta Development Council at 780-624-6545 and the NADC website at www3.gov.ab.ca/nadc.


opportunity north.ca
your connection to Alberta's north

NADC holds meeting in Fort McMurray

The Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) met in Fort McMurray on June 16 & 17, 2004 with community and business leaders. The Honourable Pearl Calahasen, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, joined Council members and representatives of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, offering her continued support to the NADC. She emphasized that "Northern Albertans, working together, need to maximize the opportunities and build strategies to meet the challenges faced in the North."

Bill Almdal, Executive Director of the Athabasca Regional Issues Working Group, provided the Council with an update on the oil sands development occurring and planned for Northern Alberta. Mr. Almdal introduced the Working Group's new Executive Director, Michael Glennon. The members and staff wished Mr. Almdal success and enjoyment in his retirement.

A presentation on the Alberta Rural Development Strategy was made to Council. The report is being developed by a Steering Committee headed by co-chairs Doug Griffiths, MLA for Wainwright, and Luke Ouellette, MLA for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake. The Steering Committee is examining how to stimulate economic growth in rural Alberta and will come up with recommendations for a rural development strategy framework to be incorporated into provincial ministry business plans.

In addition to the regular Council meeting, a Leaders' Roundtable Meeting was held to provide northern leaders a chance to present issues or concerns. Presentations were

made on the need for infrastructure, roads and facilities, the impact of high utility costs, as well as the challenges faced in the recruitment and retention of qualified human resources.

For more information on the meeting in Fort McMurray, contact Corinne Huberdeau at (780) 623-6982.

Northern Alberta contributes big numbers to the economy... the oil and gas industry

Northern Alberta produces 37% of Alberta's natural gas and 52% of Alberta's oil. In 2002, Northern Alberta contributed over \$16 billion to Alberta's international and inter-provincial exports of oil and gas.

From 2004 to 2008, investment in Northern Alberta is forecasted to reach about \$11 to \$12 billion a year, of which about \$5 billion each year will be invested in the oil sands, creating an \$8.5 billion demand for construction materials and labour and \$3.3 billion demand for machinery and equipment each year.

The region is a major engine of economic growth and development for Canada and for Alberta and will continue to attract vast amounts of investment in the coming decade, particularly in the oil sands.

Source: *Analysis of the Economic Contribution of the Northern Alberta Development Council Region to Alberta and Canada*. A full copy of the report is available at www3.gov.ab.ca/nadc.

Co-operation between Alberta and the Northwest Territories continues

(continued from page 1)

As a government we have set goals, objectives and actions for the coming four years which will be strengthened by the cooperative nature of our relationship with Alberta."

Pearl Calahasen, Alberta co-chair and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, said: "we were able to review on-going projects related to joint efforts to advance tourism, health, transportation, education and resource development with a particular emphasis on the importance of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline project. We were impressed with the work being undertaken by our respective governments related to tourism, as well as groups like the Deh Cho Travel Connection. In particular, we will look at ways of enhancing opportunities for Aboriginal tourism between Alberta and the Northwest Territories. We also agreed to take a further look at ways to cooperate in the area of research and innovation."

Also participating in the meeting was Gary Friedel, the Chair of the Northern Alberta Development Council and the MLA

for Peace River, Alberta.

The Alberta-Northwest Territories *Memorandum of Understanding* promotes co-operation and development between Alberta and the Northwest Territories. Originally signed in 1998, Alberta and the Northwest Territories signed a five-year extension last fall. The next meeting is scheduled for this fall in Edmonton.

Past accomplishments under the agreement include joint strategies for training and skill development; post secondary education access; information sharing on the economic impacts of the Mackenzie pipeline development and co-operation on enhancement of rail transportation in Northern Alberta and its connections to the Northwest Territories.

For more information on the Alberta-Northwest Territories MOU, contact Tom Baldwin at the Northern Alberta Development Council at (780) 624-6274.



Companies continue to fund bursaries for Manning area students

Manning Diversified Forest Products Ltd. and KP Wood Ltd. have awarded 134 bursaries over the past seven years to Manning area students entering college or university. As local students find the cost of furthering their education a challenge, the bursaries "give them a foot in the door and help pay for tuition," notes Real Arsenault, General Manager for Manning Diversified.

While a few of the bursary recipients have worked at Manning Diversified after graduation, it is not an expectation. In fact, most of the students take programs not related to forestry, including healthcare, technical studies, education

and business.

The companies have partnered with the Northern Alberta Development Council through the Bursary Partnership Program to sponsor return service bursaries for the students of their choice. Asked whether the companies plan to continue offering bursaries, Arsenault says, "There are always kids coming up that need help."

The Boreal Forest Research Centre administers Manning Diversified's bursary program. Information is available on the Centre's website at www.borealcentre.com.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

NADC meeting in High Level September 28 & 29, 2004

The next Northern Alberta Development Council meeting will be held on September 28 & 29, 2004 in the Town of High Level. Contact Jan Mazurik at (780) 624-6274 for more information.

NCDC 2004 Conference and Annual General Meeting in High Level September 29 to October 1, 2004

The Northwest Corridor Development Corporation (NCDC) is holding its 2004 Conference and Annual General Meeting in the Town of High Level from September 29 to October 1, 2004. The conference will have a number of prominent speakers, including the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, Honourable Lois Hole, and invited speaker Dr. Michael Goldberg.

The Corporation promotes the use and development of Canada's northwest transportation and trade corridor. The Northern Alberta Development Council acts as an advisor for the Corporation. Contact Tom Baldwin at (780) 624-6274 for more information.

2005 Northern Opportunities Seminars Swan Hills, March 10 & 11, 2005 Lac La Biche, to be announced

The Town of Swan Hills and the Town of Lac La Biche will each host a Northern Opportunities Seminar in early 2005. Open to the public, the NADC sponsored seminars are of interest to municipal and Aboriginal leaders, industry, businesses, and community members who contribute to the growth of the region.

For more information about the Swan Hills Seminar, contact Terry Vulcano at (780) 624-6536, and for the Lac La Biche Seminar, call Corinne Huberdeau at (780) 623-6980.

Glen Clegg appointed to N.A.I.T. Board

The Minister of Learning, the Honourable Lyle Oberg, recently announced Glen Clegg as the Fairview area representative on the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology's (NAIT) Board of Governors, a position created as a result of the merger between Fairview College and NAIT.

The Northern Alberta Development Council looks forward to further enhancing its positive relationship with NAIT and its Northern Alberta-based campuses through Glen's leadership and involvement.

Fairview College Legacy—Reynolds Road

As part of its *Fairview College Legacy Recognition* initiative, Fairview College has re-named 111th Street on the College Campus to "Reynolds Road" in honour of E.A. "Jim" Reynolds. A former member of the Northern Alberta Development Council, Jim was always a strong promoter of the North. He was the Town of Fairview's Mayor for many years and served as an Executive Committee member of the Mackenzie Regional Planning Commission. Jim was involved in many projects that advanced the Fairview area and Northern Alberta.

The members and staff of the Northern Alberta Development Council congratulate the Reynolds Family on this the well-deserved recognition of Jim's commitment to Fairview College, the Fairview area, the North, and to the Province of Alberta. We look forward to our next visit to Fairview College and to travelling on "Reynolds Road".

How to Reach Us:

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